

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 MMO-01 PER-01 CU-02 AID-05

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

EA-07 EUR-12 IO-13 IGA-02 /091 W

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R 121300Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4620

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 COLOMBO 1331

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CE

SUBJ: ANNUAL US POLICY ASSESSMENT: SRI LANKA

REF: 11 FAM 212.4; 75 COLOMBO 1297

1. US INTERESTS: OUR INTERESTS IN SRI LANKA ARE MODEST. IN GENERAL, WE HOPE TO SEE A POLITICALLY STABLE AND ECONOMICALLY SELF-SUFFICIENT NATION, CONTRIBUTING TO STABILITY IN THE REGION AND TAKING MODERATE POSITION IN MULTILATERAL COUNCILS. WE HOPE TO AVERT ANY SHARP TILT TOWARD GREATER INFLUENCE OF OTHER EXTERNAL POWERS AND PARTICULARLY POSSIBILITY OF NAVAL BASE RIGHTS BEING GRANTED TO SUCH OTHER COUNTRIES. OUR DIRECT INTERESTS HERE ARE TO MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE CONDUCTIVE TO THE CONTINUED USE OF COLOMBO HARBOR AS A REGULAR PORT OF CALL FOR US NAVAL SHIPS AND TO BE ALLOWED CONTINUED USE OF RADIO TRANSMISSION FACILITIES FOR VOICE OF AMERICA BROADCASTS TO OTHER SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES. IN THE SHORT RUN, IT IS IN US INTEREST TO ATTEMPT TO MODERATE THE TONE AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE FORTHCOMING COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN LINE WITH OUR HOPES FOR NEGOTIATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION WITH THE THIRD WORLD.

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2. OBJECTIVES: OUR OBJECTIVES ARE:

A) TO PROVIDE MODERATE AMERICAN PRESENCE TO SERVE AS
A TANGIBLE REMINDER OF US INTEREST IN SRI LANKA
AS A PARTIAL COUNTERWEIGHT TO OTHER EXTERNAL
POWER, PARTICULARLY USSR AND PRC;

B) TO MAINTAIN GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL
ELEMENTS OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND TO USE OUR
INFLUENCE TO COUNTERACT LEFTIST EFFORTS TO REDUCE US
AND WESTERN PRESENCE;

C) TO HELP SRI LANKA OVERCOME SERIOUS ECONOMIC
PROBLEMS AND TO DEVELOP INTO AN ECONOMICALLY VIABLE NATION
FUNCTIONING UNDER A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, STABLE,

NON-ALIGNED, AND FRIENDLY TOWARD THE US;

D) TO ENCOURAGE AMERICAN PRIVATE FIRMS TO CONSIDER
INVESTMENT HERE, DEPENDENT ON CONTINUED GSL EFFORTS TO
IMPROVE INVESTMENT CLIMATE INCLUDING ENACTMENT OF
LEGISLATIVE GUARANTEES OF SUCH INVESTMENTS;

E) TO ENCOURAGE MODERATE, CONSTRUCTIVE SRI LANKA
PARTICIPATION IN CURRENT AND CONTINUING ECONOMIC
DISCUSSIONS AMONG DEVELOPING NATIONS AND WITH
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

3. DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENT: THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
LANDSCAPE OF SRI LANKA HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY ALTERED
OVER PAST YEAR WITH GENERALLY ENCOURAGING PORTENTS FOR
US INTERESTS. THE EXPULSION FROM THE GOVT IN
SEPT 75 OF THE TROTSKYITE LANKA SAMA SAMAJA
PARTY (LSSP) (75 COLOMBO 2769), REMOVED ONE OFTEN
ANTI-US ELEMENT FROM CABINET AND OFFICIAL POSITIONS
ALTHOUGH THEY REMAIN POTENT AND VOCIFEROUS IN OPPOSITION.
THE ECONOMIC POLICIES OF THE NEW FINANCE MINISTER FELIX DIAS
BANDARANAIKE -- HIS ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRIVATE SECTOR, PRO-
GRESSIVE FISCAL MEASURES AND PROPOSAL OF A FOREIGN
INVESTMENT AUTHORITY LAW HAS SPARKED GREATER INTERNATIONAL
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COMMERCIAL INTEREST IN SRI LANKA AND GIVEN LOCAL BUSINESS-
MEN SOME GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR MAY
YET SURVIVE. US PRIVATE INVOLVEMENT IN OFFSHORE OIL
EXPLORATION (COLOMBO 106) AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A
FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK BRANCH HERE (COLOMBO 922) ARE
HARBINGERS OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER US
INVESTORS. THE LONG-EXPECTED NATIONALIZATION OF VITAL
PLANTATION SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY AND THE TAKE-OVER OF

SEVERAL COMPANIES BASED ON ALLEGED MISMANAGEMENT HAVE ALLOWED THE GOPK TO MAINTAIN ITS SOCIALIST CREDENTIALS WITHOUT FURTHER ALIENATING THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY (COLOMBO 905).

DURING THE PAST QUARTER, DOMESTIC POLITICAL SQUABBLES WITH THEIR POTENTIAL FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DISRUPTION CONTINUE TO BE PROMINENT. ADDITION OF LSSP TO OPPOSITION AND SCHEDULED ELECTIONS NEXT YEAR HAVE LED TO PARLIAMENTARY CHALLENGES TO THE GOVT IN THE FORM OF SEVERAL UNSUCCESSFUL NO-CONFIDENCE MOTIONS AND AN EFFECTIVE LSSP-LED ONE-DAY GENERAL STRIKE IN FEB 76. THE UNITED NATIONAL PARTY CONTINUES TO BE PREOCCUPIED WITH INTERNAL FEUDING BUT IS OPTIMISTIC OF SUCCESS IN COMING ELECTION. THE COMMUNIST PARTY/MOSCOW WING IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM ITS RADICAL WING TO LEAVE THE RULING COALITION BECAUSE OF THE OUSTER OF THE LSSP AND CERTAIN OF THE GOVTS MODERATE ECONOMIC POLICIES.

THE RACIAL ISSUE FLARED UP IN FEB MOSLED-SINHALESE RIOTS IN PUTTALAM WHICH WERE EFFECTIVELY QUASHED BEFORE THEY COULD SPREAD. THE TAMIL SEPARATIST MOVEMENT, HOWEVER, APPEARS LESS THREATENING TO THE GOVT SINCE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE IN INDIAN STATE OF TAMIL NADU (WHERE INDIVIDUAL SYMPATHIZERS WERE THOUGHT TO HARBOR CEYLON TAMIL EXTREMISTS WITHOUT STATE GOVT HARASSMENT) AND SINCE THE TAMIL UNITED FRONT'S UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORT IN FEB TO STAGE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE AND TO GAIN WIDER SUPPORT FOR TAMIL INDEPENDENCE.

RUMORS OF RENEWED INSURGENT-STYLE ACTIVITY CONTINUED TO SECRET

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BE WIDESPREAD BUT HARD EVIDENCE IS SLIGHT. SEVERAL RECENT BANK ROBBERIES ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED FUND-RAISING OPERATIONS.

ON THE DEVELOPMENT SIDE, OPENING OF TWO MAJOR IRRIGATION TUNNELS THIS QUARTER WAS A SIGNIFICANT STEP IN A LONG-TERM EFFORT TO BRING THE SURPLUS WATERS OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCE TO CHRONICALLY PARCHED AREAS FURTHER NORTH. A NEW EXPORT-ORIENTED TEXTILE PLANT OPENED WITH JAPANESE COLLABORATION, IS A SIGN THAT THE GOVT IS AMENABLE TO SOME PRIVATE PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT.

4. FOREIGN POLICY ENVIRONMENT IS THE DOMINANT FEATURE OF

SRI LANKA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS IS THE IMPENDING AUGUST 1976 NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT CONFERENCE. EXPANDING DIPLOMATIC COUNTACTS--BOTH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RESIDENT MISSIONS IN COLOMBO AND INCREASINGLY FREQUENT MINISTERIAL-LEVEL VISITS HERE--ARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO SRI LANKA'S PIVOTAL POSITIONS AS HOST OF THE CONFERENCE AND SUBSEQUENTLY CHAIRMAN OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES UNTIL NEXT CONFERENCE.

PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE'S RECENT TRIP TO BURMA, THAILAND AND INDONESIA WAS PART OF AN ATTEMPT TO ORGANIZE A MODERATE ASIAN BLOC WITHIN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. HER CURRENT EXTENDED TRIP TO YUGOSLAVIA, ON OTHER HAND, IS A MIXTURE OF MEDICAL, ASTROLOGICAL AND POLITICAL FACTORS.

PRIME MINISTER CONTINUES TO OPPOSE DPRK REQUEST TO REOPEN ITS RESIDENT MISSION HERE, CLOSED DURING 1971 INSURGENCY, BUT IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ITS REQUEST WILL BE GRANTED BEFORE AUGUST. IRAN IS LATEST NATION TO OPEN AN EMBASSY HERE AND THERE IS A REPORT THAT KUWAIT MAY FOLLOW SUIT. ROMANIA HAS UPGRADED ITS MISSION FROM OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR TO CHANCERY HEADED BY CHARGE.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA ARE IMPROVING WITH THE GSL
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PRIVATELY RELIEVED AT INDIA'S IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE IN TAMIL NADU AND THE CONSEQUENT PERCEIVED SETBACK TO LIKE-MINDED TAMIL NATIONALISTS HERE. VISITS TO DELHI BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY THE TRADE MINISTER DURING THE LAST QUARTER RESULTED IN PROGRESS ON OUTSTANDING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES. AN AGREEMENT ON THE INDO-SRI LANKA MARITIME BOUNDARY WAS SIGNED IN DELHI MARCH 23, 1976, BRING AGREEMENT TO FINAL "POLITICAL" ISSUE OUTSTANDING BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES (COLOMBO 1124).

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 MMO-01 PER-01 CU-02 AID-05

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

EA-07 EUR-12 IO-13 IGA-02 /091 W

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R 121300Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4621

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 COLOMBO 1331

EO 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CE

SUBJECT: ANNUAL U.S. POLICY ASSESSMENT: SRI LANKA

REF: 11 FAM 212.4; 75 COLOMBO 1297

AMONG COMMUNIST NATIONS, THE PRC REMAINS MOST POPULAR HERE AND CONTINUES SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC TIES THROUGH THE ANNUAL RICE/RUBBER BARTER ARRANGEMENT. THE USSR MAINTAINS A Foothold IN THE GOVT THROUGH THE COMMUNIST PARTY/MOSCOW'S (CP/M) CONTINUED PRECARIOUS PARTICIPATION IN RULING UNITED FRONT. CP/M LEADER PIETER KEUNEMAN ATTENDED THE 25TH CPSU CONGRESS IN MOSCOW AND USSR DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN PAID VISIT HERE, OSTENSIBLY TO SIGN AN ANNUAL PROTOCOL TO CULTURAL AGREEMENT AND PRESUMABLY TO DISCUSS NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AND OTHER BILATERAL MATTERS. HE WAS RELIABLY REPORTED TO BE DISPLEASED BY HIS LOW KEY RECEPTION BY GSL.

SRI LANKA'S DIPLOMATIC BALANCING ACT (REGIONALLY AND AMONG MAJOR POWERS) CONTINUES SUCCESSFULLY. RELATIONS WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES REMAIN GENERALLY GOOD. THE MAJOR BILATERAL CONCERN WITH UK HAS BEEN THE AMOUNT
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AND TERMS OF COMPENSATION FOR PLANTATIONS NATIONLIZED IN OCT 75; AN AMICABLE SETTLEMENT WAS RECENTLY REACHED (COLOMBO 1122). AS FOR THE US, VIRULENCE AND FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC CRITICISM FROM LEFTISTS HAVE MODERATED AND WE HAVE BEEN SPARED, SINCE THE LSSP OUSTER, THE CRITICISM FROM GOVT MINISTERS THAT

WAS SO IRKSOME IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER 1975. IN PRIVATE, GSL OFFICIAL HAVE BEEN OFTEN RECEPTIVE, ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES NONCOMMITAL, TO OUR REPRESENTATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES OF CONCERN TO US. TO OUR SATISFACTION, THE GSL APPEARS TO SHARE US VIEW THAT NON-ALIGNED DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE GUIDED AWAY FROM FRUITLESS POLITICAL RESOLUTIONS TOWARD CONSTRUCTIVE ECONOMIC TALKS.

5. LOOKING AHEAD: ON THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SCENE, SRI LANKA WILL BE MORE SIGNIFICANT IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS THAN ITS GEOPOLITICAL POSITION WOULD INDICATE. AS THE HOST FOR THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT CONFERENCE, SRI LANKA WILL SERVE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE AND ALSO AS CHAIRMAN FOR NEXT THREE YEARS OF NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE, THE ROLE THAT FORMER HOST ALGERIA HAS BEEN PLAYING TO DETRIMENT OF US INTERESTS. PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE WILL PERSONALLY PRESENT NAC DECISIONS TO THE UNGA EARLY NEXT SESSION. AT THE SAME SESSION SRI LANKA PERMREP SHIRLEY AMERASINGHE IS LIKELY TO BE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF UNGA. SRI LANKA HAS A LEADERSHIP ROLE ALSO IN LOS NEGOTIATIONS AND UNCTAD.

THE GSL IS INTENT ON FOLLOWING MIDDLE PATH AMONG THE GREAT POWERS; WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THIS GOVT TO BE A MODERATE VOICE IN THIRD WORLD COUNCILS AND TO PURSUE POLICY OF TRULY NON-ALIGNED NON-ALIGNMENT.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE SRI LANKA'S MAIN CONCERN. THEREFORE, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE CONTINUES TO BE THE MOST APPROPRIATE MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING US INTEREST AND SUPPORT. WE HAVE RECENTLY REVISED AID POLICY WITH THE HELP OF A VISITING AID TEAM. THIS AND
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OTHER ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE CAREFULLY MEASURED TO MAKE THEM CONSISTENT WITH OUR LIMITED INTERESTS. THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS:

A) AN AID PROGRAM OF DEVELOPMENT LOANS, PL 480 FOOD LOANS AND SUPPORT TO CARE PROGRAMS. PENDING THE REPORT OF THE AID TEAM, THE LEVEL SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AT APPROX FY 76 LEVELS: 100,000 TONS WHEAT FLOUR (140,000 TONS WHEAT EQUIVALENT) UNDER PL 480 TITLE I, \$8 MILLION IN DEVELOPMENT LOANS, PROVIDING MUTUALLY AGREED AND VIABLE PROJECTS ARE AVAILABLE, AND A CARE TITLE II PROGRAM OR APPROX \$3 MILLION. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO CONSIDER LIMITED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

IN SUPPORT OF AID LOANS. THE EMBASSY ALSO RECOMMENDS THAT INITIAL DOWN PAYMENT PROVISIONS IN PL 480 AGREEMENTS BE REVIEWED, PARTICULARLY WHERE MSAS ARE INVOLVED.

B) THE REVISED SHIP VISIT POLICY PROVIDED IN COLOMBO 567 SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. THIS CONSISTS OF: DOWNWARD REVISION IN NUMBER OF VISITS DURING 1976; NO VISITS IN JUNE 1 - SEPT 1 PERIOD BECAUSE OF AUGUST NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT; POSSIBLE LIMITATION ON VISITS IN EARLY 1977 WHEN GENERAL ELECTIONS MAY BE HELD AND; NO MORE THAN TWO SHIPS PER VISIT WITH DESTROYER/DESTROYER ESCORT-TYPE SHIPS PREFERRED.

C) AN OFFICIAL HIGH-LEVEL VISIT BY PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED.

D) SRI LANKA PROVIDES EXCELLENT CLIMATE FOR THE EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF INFORMATION AND EXCHANGE PROGRAMS. UNFORTUNATELY PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO BE CUT, WHILE ACTIVITIES OF OUR ADVERSARIES ARE INCREASING. THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS AN INCREASE IN LEVELS OF USIS AND CU-FUNDED PROGRAMS.

E) IF CEYLONese REQUEST RESUMPTION OF CONUS-ONLY MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM, WE SHOULD RESPOND QUICKLY AND AFFIRMATIVELY. TO ENSURE THIS, WE SHOULD
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MAINTAIN MINIMAL LINE ITEM FOR SRI LANKA IN MILITARY TRAINING BUDGET.

F) DUE TO SRI LANKA'S INCREASING PROMINENCE IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS, WE SHOULD MAKE FULL USE OF OUR GOOD CONSULTATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH KGS L OFFICIALS AND RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

G) WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN BEST RELATIONS POSSIBLE WITH ALL POLITICAL ELEMENTS AND AVOID APPEARANCE OF TAKING SIDES IN LOCAL POLITICAL INFIGHTING. AT SAME TIME, WITH ELECTIONS DUE IN NEXT YEAR WHICH COULD LEAD TO CHANGE IN GOVT, WE SHOULD INCREASE OUR CONTACTS WITH MAJOR ELEMENTS IN POLITICAL SCENE.

H) WE BELIEVE THAT SEVERAL NEW AMERICAN INVESTMENTS DEMONSTRABLY BENEFICIAL TO SRI LANKA IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS WOULD BE ASSETS IN OUR OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. WE RECOMMEND THAT REPUTABLE POTENTIAL AMERICAN

INVESTORS BE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY THE
FEASIBILITY AND PROFITABILITY OF PLACING ENTERPRISE
IN SRI LANKA, PARTICULARLY LABOR-INTENSIVE, EXPORT-
ORIENTED SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS IN LIGHT INDUSTRY AND
AGRICULTURE.

7. RESOURCE PROBLEMS: INCREASED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
DUE TO NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE, MORE PROMIENT CEYLONSE
ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS, UPCOMING ELECTIONS AND
GREATER ACTIVITY IN ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL FIELDS
WILL MAKE IT EXTREMELY DINHICULT FOR EMBASSY TO
FULFILL ITS REPORTING AND REPRESENTAIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES
IN SUITABLE AND MOST EFFECTIVE MANNER. WE THEREFORE AGAIN
RECOMMEND RESTORATION OF JUNIOR POLITICAL/ECONOMIC OFFICER
POSITION WHICH WAS TAKEN AWAY IN 1975.

8. STAFFING AND FUNDING REQUIREMENTS:

ORG - FY 77 - FY 78 - FY - FY 79

STATE - 649,000 - 714,000 - 785,000

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AID - 67,000(NOTE 1) - 73,000(NOTE 1) - 82,000(NOTE 1)

USIS - 425,000(NOTE 2) - 467,500(NOTE 2) - 514,250(NOTE 2)

DOD - 26,000 - 28,500 - 31,500

TOTAL - 1,167,000 - 1,283,000 - 1,412,750

STAFFING - ENTIRE PERIOD

ORG - AMERICAN - LOCAL

STATE - 29(NOTE 3 - 51

AID - 3(NOTE 2 - 3(NOTE 1

USIS(NOTE 4) - 5 - 31

DOD - 3 - 1

TOTAL - 40 - 86

1. THESE FIGURES WILL PROBABLY INCREASE PENDING
DECISION ON AID FUNDING LEVELS

2. USIS FIGURES INCLUDE DIRECTSUPPORT ALLOCATION
3 INCLUDES 6 MSG

4. INCLUDES 1 AMERICAN AND 3 LOCALS FOR VOA.
VAN HOLLEN

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